

DAILY BULLETIN

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OPEN NEW CHAPTER IN OUR ALLIANCE, RICE IN PARIS URGES EUROPE

Secretary of state says U.S. ready to work with Europe on common agenda 1

RICE, BARNIER DISCUSS U.S.-EU PARTNERSHIP, IRAQ, IRAN, SYRIA

Secretary of state, French foreign minister brief press after their meeting 2

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS SHAPE INDIAN OCEAN WARNING SYSTEM

February 16 Earth Observation meeting "critical" to moving forward 3

CONSENSUS SOUGHT ON DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Government officials, indigenous delegates from the Americas gather 5

HEALTH OFFICIALS BATTLE OUTBREAK OF DISEASE IN GUYANA

United States working with Guyana, global community, to help flood victims 5

OPEN NEW CHAPTER IN OUR ALLIANCE, RICE IN PARIS URGES EUROPE

Secretary of state says U.S. ready to work with Europe on common agenda

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice appealed to Europe February 8 to set aside past disagreements with the United States, and open a new chapter in the transatlantic alliance based on the unprecedented opportunity to achieve "historic global advances for justice and prosperity, for liberty and for peace."

"It is time to turn away from the disagreements of the past," Rice said in a speech at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques-Sciences Politiques de Paris. "It is time to open a new chapter in our relationship, and a new chapter in our alliance."

"America stands ready to work with Europe on our common agenda -- and Europe must stand ready to work with America," said Rice in the major policy speech of her weeklong trip to Europe and the Middle East.

Calling the present "a time of unprecedented opportunity for the transatlantic Alliance," she said that if Europeans and Americans "make the pursuit of global freedom the organizing principle of the 21st century, we will achieve historic global advances for justice and prosperity, for liberty and for peace."

Rice began her speech by recalling that the founders of both the French and American republics were inspired by the very same values. Citing examples of men and

women who have launched revolutions for freedom ranging from American civil rights champion Rosa Parks to those who brought down the Berlin Wall in 1989, she likened their courage to those of Afghans and Iraqis who have voted for freedom.

Rice said the purpose of her trip is to talk with Europeans about how America and Europe can work together to advance common ideals worldwide; President Bush will continue the conversation on his February 21-25 trip to Europe. "We on the right side of freedom's divide have an obligation to help those unlucky enough to have been born on the wrong side of that divide," she said.

Describing in more detail the new chapter she envisions in a U.S.-European partnership based on common opportunities rather than common threats, Rice spoke of supporting democratic reform in the Middle East in general, and in Afghanistan and Iraq in particular.

She cited efforts to encourage political pluralism, economic openness and the growth of civil society through the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative.

Rice acknowledged that, as President Bush has said, the spread of freedom is the work of generations, but "spreading freedom in the Arab and Muslim worlds is also urgent work that cannot be deferred."

In Iraq, she said, "the transatlantic partnership must rise to the challenge that the Iraqi people have set for us."

"We must support them as they form their political institutions. We must help them with economic reconstruction and development. And we must stay by their side to provide security until Iraqis themselves can take full ownership of that job," she said.

Rice also called for Europe to join with the United States in supporting a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition to what the Israelis and Palestinians must do, there is a "need for all of us to make clear that Iran and Syria must stop supporting terrorists who seek to destroy every chance for peace," she said.

"This is the best chance for peace that we are likely to see for some years to come; and we are acting to help Israelis and Palestinians seize this chance. President Bush is committed. I am personally committed. We must all be committed to seizing this chance," Rice said.

"Development, transparency and democracy reinforce

each other," she said in closing. "That is why the spread of freedom under the rule of law is our best hope for progress."

Rice said America has everything to gain from having a stronger Europe as a partner in building a safer and better world. "So let each of us bring to the table our ideas and our experience and our resources; and let us discuss and decide, together, how best to employ them for democratic change."

After concluding her speech, Rice took questions from the audience on subjects ranging from the development of Iraqi democracy to biological weapons.

RICE, BARNIER DISCUSS U.S.-EU PARTNERSHIP, IRAQ, IRAN, SYRIA

Secretary of state, French foreign minister brief press after their meeting

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier spoke optimistically of a reinvigorated partnership after their meeting in Paris February 8.

"This is a time for a reinvigoration of our longstanding partnership and friendship to turn a new page and to take advantage of the many opportunities before us," said Rice, recalling that France was the United States' first ally during the days of the American Revolution.

Rice said she spoke with French President Jacques Chirac about the importance of Europe and America supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the Iraqi people as they seek to build a democracy, and the many democratic changes taking place across the world. "When the United States and France work together, there is a great deal that we can achieve," she said.

Barnier in his opening remarks praised the major foreign policy speech given earlier in the day by Rice at the Institute of Political Science in Paris (Institut d'Etudes Politiques-Sciences Politiques de Paris). "You reminded us of everything that brings us together," he said.

"The world works better when the Americans and the Europeans cooperate," said Barnier.

Asked about Iran, Rice said, "What we need is unity of purpose and unity of message to the Iranians." In addition to reiterating U.S. concerns about Iran's aspirations for nuclear weapons, she called for an end to Iran's support of terrorism and groups that would destroy the possibilities for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. She expressed appreciation for the efforts of the European Three (the United Kingdom, France and Germany) to give Iran "a path ... back to the international community."

Regarding NATO's future role, Rice said, "How NATO's role will evolve, I think, is still an open question, but we need to be open to new roles that NATO might play. I do not think that NATO needs to become the policeman of the world." She said in addition that NATO is "a bulwark for democratic states and it can therefore play an important role in the spread of democracy and liberty."

On the Middle East peace process, Rice said "this is a time that everybody should be involved."

"The parties are going to need everyone's help to take advantage of this very fragile opportunity to move forward," she said.

Asked about Syrian interference in Lebanon, Rice said, "There should be a very clear message to the Syrians that it is out of step with where the rest of the region is going to interfere in the democratic processes in Lebanon, and that those [Lebanese] elections should go forward."

Rice is nearing the end of a weeklong trip to Europe and the Middle East. She has thus far visited the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, the Middle East, Italy and France. On February 9 she is scheduled to go on to Brussels, Belgium, where she will meet with NATO and European Union colleagues, and then she will travel to Luxembourg before returning to Washington February 10.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS SHAPE INDIAN OCEAN WARNING SYSTEM

February 16 Earth Observation meeting "critical" to moving forward

By Cheryl Pellerin
Washington File Staff Writer

(This is part one of a four-part series on the elements of a tsunami early warning system.)

Washington -- In the weeks after a December 26, 2004, earthquake and tsunami ravaged Indian Ocean nations, an international plan is taking shape to establish an early warning system for tsunami and other disasters in that battered region by mid-2006.

The latest gathering of representatives of the United Nations, affected countries, and nations around the world was a January 28-29 ministerial meeting in Phuket, Thailand, on regional cooperation in developing a tsunami warning system for the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia.

The outcome, said Mark Lagon, deputy assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs, was a demonstration of "the will of the international community to build such a system."

On January 29, ministers and special envoys from 42 countries and the European Commission issued a political declaration whose 18 points laid out a framework and timeline for a tsunami early warning system.

According to the Phuket Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements, an effective early warning system should include risk assessment, hazard monitoring and detection, prediction and formulation of warning, dissemination and communication of warning messages and knowledge and preparedness to act.

The declaration proposed to move toward a coordinated regional system and welcomed offers of data and information exchange and financial and technical assistance by countries and international organizations to support related capacity-building activities in the affected area.

The early warning system will be integrated into existing hazard warning systems and into national development plans, and the ministerial declaration set mid-2006 as the

target date for implementing essential elements of a regional tsunami early warning system.

The document acknowledged proposals by various countries to establish an Indian Ocean warning system and resolved to ensure coherence with initiatives being undertaken by other bodies, including the International Oceanographic Commission of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the 59-nation, U.S.-led Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).

According to a statement by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the GEOSS system for monitoring the Earth will help mitigate the impact of tsunami and other disasters, forecast weather months in advance, and more effectively predict climate change, El Niño weather patterns, drought, malaria outbreaks and other global events.

The intergovernmental ad hoc Group on Earth Observations (GEO) is developing the framework of a 10-year GEOSS implementation plan that it plans to present February 16 at a summit in Brussels, Belgium. GEO was tasked in 2003 with developing such a plan. The Brussels meeting is the third GEO summit on Earth observations.

“We consider the ministerial-level February 16 meeting,” Lagon said, “to be crucial in taking an existing capacity and moving forward to help give this technical capacity to the Indian Ocean region, and ultimately tie several regional tsunami warning systems together so they can share compatible information.”

An effective early warning system for the Pacific already exists, Lagon added - the International Tsunami Warning System -- “which is based on a partnership with UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. The hope is to expand that existing capacity to the Indian Ocean in a fashion that is suited to that region and its needs, which are a bit different than the Pacific’s.”

In other parts of the world, the physical elements of operational early warning systems for tsunami and other disasters include sensors in the sea, on land and underground to record land motion and other changes, and transmitters linked to satellites, the Internet and other communications devices to relay those changes to monitoring stations around the world.

For the ocean, NOAA developed a system of Deep Ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART). The current system comprises six moored buoys that provide accurate and timely tsunami warning information.

NOAA and other organizations also monitor sea levels close to land using tide gauges, which provide another dataset important in an early warning system.

To monitor landmasses, the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Geological Survey operate the Global Seismographic Network (GSN) of 137 seismic stations distributed around the globe that continuously measure and record the Earth’s vibrations.

The GSN is one of many seismic networks operating around the globe. Another is the International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) Organization, which is being built to monitor compliance with the CTBT.

The IMS network uses seismic, hydroacoustic (underwater sound) and infrasound (sound with a frequency too low to be detected by the human ear) technologies to monitor Earth vibrations.

All these technologies are key elements in the design of early warning systems that can protect life and property from the destructive power of nature. The next three articles in this series will examine the technologies and their application to a proposed Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system.

Information about NOAA DART buoys is available at <http://www.pmel.noaa.gov/tsunami/Dart/>

Information about the Global Seismographic Network is available at <http://www.iris.edu/about/GSN/>

Information about the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission is available at <http://ioc.unesco.org/iocweb/index.php>

Information about the International Monitoring System is available at <http://www.ctbto.org/>

CONSENSUS SOUGHT ON DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Government officials, indigenous delegates from the Americas gather

Washington -- Governmental and indigenous delegates from throughout the Western Hemisphere will gather during the week of February 7 at the Organization of American States (OAS) headquarters in Washington. They will meet to draft an "Inter-American Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People."

Discussions on the draft declaration began in 1996. In 1999, the OAS General Assembly mandated the creation of the declaration and a working group was established to this end. Formal negotiations began in October 2003; the current talks will mark the fifth negotiating session.

Ambassador Juan Leon, alternate representative of Guatemala to the OAS and chair of the working group charged with the draft declaration, said the process is a "search for the full realization of millions of human beings that they are not marginalized by political, economic, social, cultural, educational and judicial development."

As delegates work to forge a draft declaration to reflect this goal, U.S. Permanent Representative to the OAS John Maisto added that the United States strongly supports efforts to forge the draft declaration. He noted that the United States has been a major financial contributor to the OAS's specific fund that supports the negotiations, and added that the dialogue itself is noteworthy.

"The simple fact that this comprehensive, productive and cooperative dialogue is occurring between countries and indigenous peoples and populations from throughout the Western Hemisphere is a major milestone," he said. "The fact that all sides are making good-faith efforts to understand and address these issues is a great step forward and major achievement to the credit of all participants."

Maisto indicated that some of the tough issues in the current negotiations -- lands, justice, sovereignty and self-determination -- provide an opportunity for the United States to share with the Western Hemisphere the policies and experience from its long history with American Indians.

The U.S. official acknowledged that the United States'

story with American Indians involves great injustice against native peoples, as well as great contributions by native peoples. The fundamental theme of this story, he said, is the obligation of states to work effectively with indigenous populations toward reconciliation and honoring their freedoms and control over their own futures.

Maisto pointed out that on November 4, 2004, President Bush signed an executive memorandum reaffirming his administration's adherence to a national policy of self-determination for Indian tribes -- a policy that began under President Richard Nixon.

"The U.S. is proud of its longstanding commitment to tribal sovereignty [and] self-determination, and government-to-government relationships with federally recognized tribes," Maisto said. "A policy of self-determination for American Indians is one of the most positive aspects of the U.S. experience, and may potentially serve as a model for better relations between other countries and indigenous peoples and populations."

The U.S. ambassador to the OAS expressed optimism that a consensus on a draft declaration will be reached during the current negotiations.

"There is a strong will among both indigenous peoples and OAS member countries to continue to work together on this declaration, and my delegation believes that, ultimately, we will reach consensus," he said.

HEALTH OFFICIALS BATTLE OUTBREAK OF DISEASE IN GUYANA

United States working with Guyana, global community, to help flood victims

By Eric Green

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Health officials are working to prevent the spread of disease in Guyana, an outbreak that resulted from December 2004 floods in the South American nation, says the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

In a February 7 statement, PAHO said the number of cases of a bacterial disease known as leptospirosis continues to rise, although an outbreak of other diseases

is also a threat to public safety. The health hazards are due to severe flooding that was caused by heavy rainfall, directly affecting 192,000 residents as of January 25.

Leptospirosis, which is referred to as the “Flood Disease,” is usually caused by exposure to contaminated water, said PAHO. Symptoms of leptospirosis include high fever, severe headache, chills, muscle aches and vomiting, and may include jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhea, or a rash. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, if left untreated the disease can lead to kidney damage, meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain and spinal cord), liver failure or respiratory distress. Death occurs in rare cases.

PAHO said it is monitoring new cases of leptospirosis and collaborating closely with Guyana’s Ministry of Health to prevent a further spread of the disease. The agency said that 120,000 people have already received a weekly preventive dose of an antibiotic called doxycycline and that residents from flooded areas who show symptoms of leptospirosis can receive treatment in mobile clinics.

PAHO officials warned that health workers in Guyana should not focus solely on leptospirosis, whose wide range of symptoms is shared by other diseases.

Bernadette Theodore-Gandi, PAHO’s representative in Guyana, said: “We should be careful not to overlook the other diseases that may be a result of the flood, such as tuberculosis or pneumonia. In the coming weeks, we should also be very alert to cases of vector-borne and water/food-borne diseases. The floods created an enormous breeding capacity for mosquitoes. We have to take into account that this may also lead to outbreaks of dengue.”

The total number of deaths directly or indirectly related to the floods has now risen to 19 people, said PAHO. Some of the deaths were caused by drowning and acute dehydration and treatment delays due to floodwaters.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been working closely with PAHO, the government of Guyana, the United Nations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and other nongovernmental organizations to provide assistance to flood victims in Guyana.

USAID said in a February 1 statement that it has provided a total of \$447,012 in emergency relief assistance to Guyana.

The agency said the heavy rainfall that began in late December 2004 caused severe flooding in the administrative regions of West Demerara/Essequibo Islands, Demerara/Mahaica, Mahaica/West Berbice, and the capital city of Georgetown. If there is no further rainfall in the country, the flood waters will take between 30 and 39 days to dissipate, said USAID.

More information about USAID’s humanitarian efforts in Guyana is available online at:
<http://www.usaid.gov>

Pleases Note: Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: **www.usmission.ch**

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